



CONNECT THE WARFIGHTER

Satellite Communications

"Global Access...Core to the Edge"



In the continuing Global War on Terror, joint warfighting forces are more mobile, more precise and more lethal than ever before. To this end, we've become increasingly reliant upon networked capabilities. Given the austere environments, rugged terrain, and great distances at which our deployed forces operate, satellite communications (SATCOM) is a mainstay for networking our warfighting forces.

Paramount to sustaining our competitive edge is countering threats to our space dominance with thoughtfully defined capabilities achieved through sound investment, acquisition, and information assurance strategies.

SATCOM is increasingly providing the connectivity necessary to link dispersed forces across the continuum of operations. SATCOM provides dispersed joint warfighters with a critical enabler for actionable decisions with the ability to bridge the "first tactical mile" of forward-deployed forces with key sources of information through connectivity with reach back resources via the GIG.



Continued investment in SATCOM systems is crucial to achieve net-centricity. Today's on-orbit military SATCOM systems are near end-of-life across the board and need replenishment. Consequently, we must continue to invest institutional energy and work with the Services, Combatant Commands (COCOMs), and agencies in partnership with the SATCOM Industry to advocate and defend the funding for new space capabilities. We need to continue to refine the SATCOM capabilities needed and advocate for Congressional support for full and consistent funding of the developmental efforts if we are to deliver network-enabled forces.

Commercial SATCOM will be an integral part of the DOD's SATCOM architecture for the foreseeable future. Several desirable SATCOM joint warfighting attributes have been identified that we want built into our commercial contracts such as responsiveness, coverage, network operations, flexibility, capacity, and protection. Further, we need to improve our methods of constructing leasing agreements in order to promote bandwidth bundling and provide flexibility for expanding capabilities.

Protecting our satellites is just as important as protecting our terrestrial networks. We need to keep our satellites fully mission capable by developing and maintaining sound procedures and methods that enable us to quickly react to threats to our satellites and ground control segments. In addition, we need to enhance our ability to mitigate threats by working with our industry partners and creating better situation awareness tools across the entire satellite network infrastructure. Finally, we need to develop and fund reconstitution capabilities to ensure continuance of warfighting capabilities in response to space asset losses whether from anomaly, accident, or intentional aggressor action.

"Warfighter demands for satellite platforms and related terminal programs continue to grow as we field more bandwidth-intensive systems. To meet our requirements for beyond-line-of-sight and reach-back communications, we must maintain military satellite communications launch schedules, leverage commercial capabilities, pursue efficiencies, and continue research and development initiatives."

Statement to the 110th Congress

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